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ABSTRACT

This workbook provides guidance for the implementation of teacher advisory programs in middle-level schools. Teacher advisory programs are designed to change impersonal school climates, provide a supportive framework for student risk-taking, and promote the healthy development of adolescents. Two program models are described, one initiated in Middlebury, Vermont, and one developed in the Ysleta Independent School District in El Paso, Texas. The Vermont model is supplemented by suggestions for numerous activities contributed by teachers from all over the state that teacher and advisors can conduct in small-group advisories, homerooms, or other arrangements. The workbook provides a model of teacher advisory programming in Vermont, numerous activities and ideas for teacher advisory meetings, ideas that may spark teacher advisory activities, and a list of resource materials. The workbook describes the efforts of a teacher/advisor in Vermont to strengthen children's commitment to success in school; facilitate interaction between the child, family, and school; actively assist children in self-advocacy; and foster equal access to the experience of school for each child. It is noted that an early objective of the Vermont program was to reduce the number of students assigned to one adult in homeroom by asking all teachers and paraprofessionals to serve as teacher advisors. The second model described in the workbook is a teacher advisory program at Desert View Middle School, El Paso, Texas, that used a comprehensive curriculum guide for grades 7 and 8. The guide, which is reproduced in full in this workbook, represents an organized, structured teacher advisory program, with required topics in the various areas of social development, school adjustment, emotional growth, and study skills. The workbook concludes with a list of 10 helpful resources and a sheet for submitting ideas for activities to be incorporated into a projected second volume of the workbook. Readers are also encouraged to photocopy the materials in the workbook. (RH)

ONE T A TO GROW, PLEASE!

A Workbook of Teacher Advisory Ideas and Activities

by

Carol Spencer

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ONE T A TO GROW, PLEASE!

A Workbook of Teacher Advisory Ideas and Activities

These materials have been gathered to help teachers meet the needs of early adolescent students. Photocopying is not only permitted; it is encouraged. Workspace and a request to you for Volume II ideas are included.

Written and Compiled

by

Carol Spencer

With support and major contributions from:

The Vermont State Department of Education

The Vermont Middle Grades Initiative: Definition, Development, Dissemination

and members of

The Vermont Association for Middle Level Education

Drawings by Joe Bolger

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First Edition

FOREWORD

The ideal teacher of young adolescents expresses his or her humanity every day through deliberate, creative expressions of caring. Such teachers are not just bleeding hearts; they are themselves continually maturing grownups who search for and discover effective ways to interact responsively and responsibly with their students through the many exigencies of growing up. No single innovation in the thirty year middle level education movement more fully reflects an "institutionalization of caring" than Teacher Advisory programs. And perhaps, no single middle school innovation has been more personally challenging to many of us who, in spite of our desires to be an effective advisory, sometimes feel awkward about how to go about expressing the compassion and humanity we feel for our students. After all, we were prepared to teach subject matter - not the processes of growing successfully into healthy adolescence in the midst of the unprecedented circumstances of contemporary times.

During the last few years, many Vermont middle level faculties have instituted Teacher-Advisory programs. These daily meetings of an adult and a dozen or sometimes fewer students stand as an alliance of generations committed to seeing that youngsters grow up well. In schools I visit where TA have been established, serendipitous encounters reveal how much both generations value both their daily sessions and also the occasional outings and projects they've shared. In the natural early adolescent fashion of reflecting their personal values through anecdotes, students often share poignant sketches of their teacher-advisors - stories that reveal the reciprocity that always characterize authentic teacher-student relationships. What a heartwarming revelation it is to hear a twelve year old speak of an advisor in terms that convey felt confidence that in this school there is an adult "who is always there for me."

Carol Spencer has pioneered in bringing TAs to Vermont middle level schools. As a principal in Middlebury, she introduced the concept to her colleagues. She led them to visit schools out of state which had TA, and together they created their own program for seventh and eighth grades. Hearing about the Middlebury innovation, other Vermont middle level educators soon came to see their program. A year later, Carol and her colleagues conducted a one-day workshop that launched TAs in several additional schools. As this manuscript goes to press, TAs are scattered across Vermont middle level schools and being planned in many others. This is a propitious time for Carol, VAMLE and the Vermont Department of Eduction to collaborate through the auspices of the Carnegie Foundation to publish this excellent resource written <u>by advisors for advisors</u>. We urge every reader to become a user, anticipating that the second edition will include activities and suggestions from every Vermont Teacher-Advisor. And we are all in Carol's debt for her initiative and dedication in achieving this project!

Chris Stevenson
University of Vermont

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I. A VERMONT MODEL OF TEACHER ADVISORY

INTRODUCTION

During our recent preparations for a middle level conference session on teacher advisories, a colleague asked me to clarify the "TA Agenda." Once a school has made the decision to have a teacher advisory program, what does a good program look like? Because of my own experience at a 7th and 8th grade union junior high, I replied with certainty, that depends upon who the teacher advisor is, and what the school's goals for the program are. In these introductory remarks, before moving to more concrete aspects, it is important to talk about the vision for teacher advisory.

There is no one set way to shape a teacher advisory program. While there are some essential components of a basic TA program, e.g. one teacher and eight to twelve students, times to meet on a regular basis, and a commitment to helping children to be successful in school, the scope of the program varies tremendously from school to school. In programs similar to the one with which I was involved, each teacher advisor develops his/her own plan of action for the year. My own plan included activities which helped children in my group to get to know one another, activities in and out of school which were just plain fun to do together, and activities which helped the children to do a better job for themselves in school. I drew heavily on the expertise of others in my school and books to find group spirit building activities. The children in my TA group each year were a fruitful source of ideas for how to proceed. It was important to me to shape the time we had together to meet the needs individuals had. Those needs changed from year to year. And finally, our program was shaped by the requests from our centralized team leader council for a wide variety of school projects and school business to be conducted by TA's. In our school, there were as many different models of teacher advisory as there were teacher advisory groups. In this model of teacher advisory, no formal affective or study skills curriculum has been adopted as yet.

In contrast to my experience with teacher advisory, is a program developed in the Ysleta Independent School District in El Paso, Texas. The program has adopted a rich compendium of activities which are organized into two extensive curriculum guides, one for the 7th grade and one for the 8th grade. Each teacher works within the framework of the curriculum guide in shaping a teacher advisory. A description of this program and some sample activities are included at the end of this workbook.

The descriptions which follow include an in-depth look at the inception and development of the program in which I served as a teacher advisor for four years. In the summer of 1984, a small group of teachers met with the guidance counselor and administrators for a day to review staff opinions on teacher advisory and to lay out the beginnings of a teacher advisory program for students in grades 7 and 8. Here is some of the information which they considered and some of the knowledge gained over five years of working with the TA program.

WHY HAVE A TEACHER ADVISORY PROGRAM?

Staff surveys identified problems within the school which clearly indicated the need for some type of change in the structure of school and in the relationship between the adults and the children. Staff reported that the atmosphere within the school was not very personal. Kids, they said, were falling through the cracks. When we found out something about a child, it was because we ran into each other in the faculty room and the topic happened to come up. When a child had a problem, no one was really on top of it. We drifted around the problem. Maybe there was consistent help for the child and maybe there was not.

Other staff described the transition between the feeder schools and the seventh grade at the union school as "severe." Students and their parents needed someone at the junior high as a contact person to ease the transition. Parents needed a person to contact when they wanted information or help. Parents in the feeder schools were concerned about sending their children away from their home school. They wanted to know that someone in the junior high would know their child as an individual.

Another problem reported by veteran team teachers related to students' experience at team meeting. While the intention at team meeting was to help students to improve, sometimes the process became adversarial - teachers described the errors and omissions committed by the student, while the student had a fairly silent, listening role.

There was a concern about the general level of behavior. Hallways were noisy and full of undesirable language and physical contact. Some students dropped out of the eighth grade, some were truant, some cut classes. This was unacceptable to us as a staff. We felt that it was happening because our school was an anonymous place for many students.

Our hope, which has since been fulfilled, was that a teacher advisory program would be one of the ways in which we could begin to address these problems and change the atmosphere in our school.

HOW WILL TEACHER ADVISORY SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS?

Students between the ages of 10 and 14, generally grades 5 through 8, have a lot on their minds. It is a period of rapid intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth. Families are in flux. Students bring with them to school a "whole child" who needs to know and be known by an adult. These students are wondering about things in a new way, worrying about friendships, sex, drugs, academic success, money, clothes, siblings, homework, stepparents, cheating, fitting in. When adults in a building do not know children individually, children are left to create their own zeitgeist within the school. They create social cliques to answer the all-important questions of who will my friends be and how will I fit in? They find outlets for self-expression in acceptable and unacceptable ways, often testing the authority of the system. They make their own judgments about the importance of academics in relation to the underground, largely adult-absent world they see as their primary identity group in school.

Teacher advisory changes that climate radically in many schools. The simple act of assigning one teacher to a small group of students in an advisory capacity makes school a less anonymous place. On a visit to the Shoreham-Wading River Middle School on Long Island, New York, a colleague asked the students who had agreed to meet with us, "If you were to lose the money you now have available from the power plant and you had to give up some of the wonderful things you have here in this middle school, what would be the things you would want to keep?" The students answered without hesitation that the thing they would keep would be their teacher advisory program. That was a powerful and unexpected answer for us to hear. The recent Carnegie Report, TURNING POINTS, states: "Assign an adult advisor for every student. Every student should be well known by at least one adult in the middle grade school.... Through small-group advisories, homerooms, or other arrangements, teachers and other staff can become mentors to and advocates for students, as well as the primary contact for parents." (TURNING POINTS, page 37)

In one of the basic primers of middle grades education, THIS WE BELIEVE, the National Middle School Association includes the statement: "Each transescent learner needs an adult who teaches him or her well and is in a position to give individual attention. Therefore the middle school should be organized so that every youngster has such an adult, one who has a special responsibility for the individual's academic and personal welfare." (THIS WE BELIEVE, N.M.S.A., 1982, pages 12-13.)

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Insuring academic and personal success for each child is greater than the sum of what happens in three or more individual classes each day. A good teacher advisory program can provide a supportive framework within which children can be encouraged to take risks, to fail safely, and to succeed gloriously in school every day.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS FOR THE TA PROGRAM?

Goals for a teacher advisory program evolve with each year of experience. In my own school's teacher advisory program, the overriding goal was to help children to be as successful as they possibly could be. My own goals in teacher advisory were:

- To strengthen each child's commitment to success in school through:
    - less anonymity
    - the belief that each child is important as an individual
    - concrete lessons about the business of school;
- To connect the child, the family and the school;
- To actively assist the child in self-advocacy; and
- To foster equal access to the experience of school for each child.

These are not goals I could have articulated during my first year in the program. That year, the only agreement our faculty made was to reduce the number of students assigned to one adult in homeroom by asking all teachers and paraprofessionals to serve as teacher advisors. Our goals for the first year were to see what difference, if any, that made to the general climate of our school and to answer the question of whether or not to adopt a formal curriculum for the program.

HOW ARE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ASSIGNED TO TAs?

After considering a number of options, we chose to assign students and teachers randomly. Although we respected the information from middle level research which describes the importance of friends in the middle grades, we had a vision of teacher advisory time as a time to make friends in a group of people students might not ordinarily choose to be friends with or even have systematic contact with. Choosing a random selection system was a way of saying to ourselves, to the children and to the community, that all children were special in our school. We did not want to take on the burden of defending a more deliberate selection system in which students, parents or teachers had a role in assigning students to the group.

Through trial and error during the first year, we developed a process for assigning students to TA groups in which the computer began by dividing the students into groups of 8 - 12. Because our teams were mixed teams of 7th and 8th grades, our TA groups were also multi-grade. Students' TA groups were comprised of students and teachers associated with the student's core team. The number of TA groups each year varied depending upon the number of available adults and included all full time teachers, all part time teachers who had a morning schedule in the junior high, and all paraprofessionals. Each of us who did not teach full time on the core team was assigned to one of the core teams as an adjunct for the year. This meant that we served the team as a teacher advisor with all of the attending duties and were invited to participate in most of the events sponsored by the team throughout the year. Adjuncts included the principal, the guidance counselor, paraprofessionals and teachers of art, music, home economics, industrial arts, physical education, special education and study skills.

During the summer, each of us was invited to look at our list of students and to point out to the guidance counselor, who is the program's coordinator, any difficulties we might foresee in the group based on our knowledge of the students. The counselor then decided whether or not to make changes before making the lists final.

Once lists were final, most TA groups settled in to the business of becoming a group. If a child or parents requested a change, that request was processed through the guidance counselor in a standardized procedure. This procedure included consultation with parents and confidential meetings between the counselor and the teacher, the counselor and the student, and the counselor, teacher and student. The counselor's goal was to help the student and the teacher to establish a viable relationship. The process had intrinsic value for the student who learned to work out a troublesome relationship, rather than jumping to the conclusion that a change was in order. This involved time and constructive meetings to talk about the relationship.

WHERE DO TA'S MEET?

We converted all available spaces into TA meeting places. Creating a sense of home for my students was important to me so, although my office was very small, I decided to adapt it for TA use. My first group built a two-tiered loft, with the help of our industrial arts teacher. Students affectionately called the loft "in-school suspension." Each morning, two students climbed to the highest perch while one or two would choose the lower perch and some sat on pillows and chairs on the floor. Throughout the school, teachers met students in small offices, in classrooms, in parts of classrooms, in the gym, and sometimes in our bookrooms. Students used our TA space well. Throughout the day they left over-sized equipment in it. They left valuables in the top desk drawer. They knew where extra pencils and pens were kept (and the rules for borrowing same). They had access to a telephone. It was a small office space but had versatile options available so that students could match their seating choices with their moods. Importantly, there was a mirror in the office, which got a lot of use throughout the day. The bulletin board surrounding the mirror was covered with pictures of each person in the TA. There were pictures I had taken with a Polaroid camera, school pictures, and pictures we took whenever we did something special together. Also on the bulletin board were the weekly band lesson schedules, special announcements, and reminder notes that students wrote to themselves.

WHEN DOES TA MEET?

By pushing back the time of our opening to the moment the last bus arrived and combining these extra minutes with our old homeroom time, we were able to find about 17 minutes each morning for advisory groups to meet. We also met once every six days for forty minutes with our whole group, except for those in Student Council. Most schools find it necessary to create the time they need for teacher advisory. My experience with TA first thing in the morning was very positive. I was able to field early morning problems and help the students to get their day started well.

The relationship which evolves between the advisor and the advisees must be somewhat affected by the time of day and frequency of meetings. There was a sharp contrast between our early morning and our day-6 late afternoon meetings. Daily, early morning time became an essential part of our program. We shared daily announcements, replacing the public address system used in many schools. We also had a chance to review special schedules for the day, get students ready for tests and projects, check on band instruments, lunch money, get books covered, or go over any special school problems highlighted in morning announcements - all this while students were still fresh.

WHAT HELP DO TEACHERS NEED IN GETTING STARTED?

We had agreed during our planning meetings that we would not conduct any specific inservice training in order to become advisors. Most staff members felt confident that they had the general communication skills and commitment to the program to try on the role of teacher advisor. In our case it was a plan of "ready, fire, aim." Some teachers wanted to try the experience and then decide upon training needed. Others felt that any specific training might change the commitment from its simple, straightforward beginnings into a more complex, adopted curriculum.

There was lengthy discussion about whether or not teacher advisory constituted another contractual "preparation". We made the decision to avoid that problem, by creating a model of teacher advisory which did not require formal preparation time. There have been pros and cons to that decision. On one hand, teachers have flourished, finding ways to meet children's needs by creating many different varieties of teacher advisories. On the other hand, there are many fine social skills and affective curricula which could be, but have not been considered. One Vermont school which has recently adopted the Quest curriculum for its seventh grade TA reports high satisfaction among both teachers and students.

Once the teachers and principal in our school had made the decision to incorporate a teacher advisory program, the search was on for a wide range of activities from which teachers could draw quickly and easily. During the first two years of our program, we met on a voluntary basis once each quarter to share ideas and successful activities.

Teachers who asked for specific staff development work benefitted from training in active listening and in using "I" messages, two common sense techniques which provide advisors with skills for listening and talking with students more purposefully. General middle school courses provide a strong knowledge base about the developmental needs of early adolescents. TA programs are now established in many different parts of Vermont and New England so that school visitations are possible. There is an excellent two-part filmstrip series entitled "Teacher-Advisory Program," published by Teacher Education Resources (P.O. Box 206, Gainesville, Florida 32602). This series provides a good introduction to the concepts of teacher advisory, and an outline of suggested activities.

WHAT EXACTLY DOES A TEACHER ADVISOR DO?

As a teacher advisor, I eventually took on a variety of roles. Here is a list of some of them:

- In August I called the homes of each person in my group, introducing myself to the student and to parents.

- In September I planned some orientation activities within my TA group, to fit in with the general orientation they were going through. This gave 8th graders a chance to help 7th graders with such things as walking through their schedules and learning to open their lockers, going to lunch, and finding the bus after school.

- Also in September students planned an overnight camping trip. They took several weeks to organize meal planning, purchase of food, activity planning, and mapping a route. My husband and I took the students camping for one night at our camp on Lake Champlain.

- I taught the school code of procedures, responsibilities, rules and consequences to the students in my group.

- In September I phoned home to personally invite the parents of my students to come to our fall open-house.

- During open-house I met with the parents in my group. We talked about their school concerns and how the TA would function throughout the year.

- At the mid-point of the trimester, I received copies of interim reports for each student in each course. I separated file copy from home copy, coordinated the report, shared the information with the students, sent it home with the students, and insured that it was returned signed. Follow-up responsibilities included transmitting to the teachers any information which came back from parents.

- I served as a liaison between the core team, the special subject teachers, and the students in my group when questions arose about assignments, notebook requirements or scheduling.

- I served as a liaison between the student and the core team when the student expressed need for help in voicing a problem to a teacher or to the team.

- I role-played with students to help them to prepare for their conversations with the individual teachers or with the team about academic or behavioral concerns.

- I responded to parents' concerns by putting them in touch with the team or with the teacher they needed.

- I handed out and collected report cards.

- I supervised each student's required assignment book, checking it weekly to insure its existence and its proper use.

- Once every six days in supervised study, I helped students with assignments, assisted in notebook organization, and got an update on how each subject was going, from the students' point of view.

- I taught my students proper assembly behavior, oriented them to the auditorium, and sat with them at every assembly.

- I took my students and some of their friends bowling and roller skating several times during the year.

- I had lunch with my TA three or four times each year. Their preferred lunch was pizza from the local pizzeria.

- I took six of my TA's for a radio audition at a city radio station.

- Each day, I read morning announcements and discussed them with my students.

- On a needs-only basis, I pulled my students out of class individually to talk with them one-on-one about a brewing or existing problem.

- I lent out $24 in change, picked up musical instruments at home 5 times, gave out 55 pencils, went through 6 boxes of kleenex, suffered through innumerable bad junior high jokes, and fell in advisorly love 48 times.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF HAVING A TA PROGRAM?

We instituted the teacher advisory program simultaneously with other facets of middle school: full teaming, heterogeneous grouping, a school-wide discipline code, interim reports, a reduction in the number of shared staff, and a different bell schedule than the adjacent high school. It is difficult, therefore, to isolate teacher advisory per se and talk about its particular effects within the school. However, there were clear changes which occurred and TA was a significant part of the cause:

- Children got to know one another in a way that was closer and more constructive than the ways they usually got to know each other in school. They saw each other as much more real people who shared a lot of the same concerns and joys. It wasn't so easy to leave TA and go put labels on people from other groups or walks of life. They shared friendships with people they would not have been friends with in a more traditional setting, left to their own devices. They learned tolerance. They learned to criticize constructively. They learned that they had valuable experience to share with younger students. They felt encouraged and invited to be a part of the school.

- School became a more personal place. There were many more adults actively involved with many more students.

- On a survey asking about priorities for the middle school, parents reported a high degree of satisfaction with the TA program. As the middle school model matured, the reaction of parents to the junior high in general became far more positive and openly supportive. More recent survey results are reported in the VAMLE JOURNAL, Fall, 1990.

- After the first year, in which 8th graders who had become accustomed to a more high school-like atmosphere complained, students voiced strong support for and enjoyment of the program.

- There was a substantial reduction in the grade level and clique-oriented divisions and divisiveness within the school.

- Special education teachers and classrooms lost their labels because they were seen as part of the general run of things.

- Children with special needs had a structured social time in which to interact with their age-peers. There was a significant positive change in the attitude of all students towards students from previously self-contained programs.

- There was a strong vehicle for communicating school procedures and daily school news to all staff as morning announcements grew to be a major, daily communication tool.

- Daily attendance improved.

- The number and severity of discipline incidents declined sharply with drop-out rate, truancy and class-cutting virtually eliminated.

For those of us who had worked and taught at the middle grades in a more secondary atmosphere, teacher advisory brought a concrete way to be close to our students. As an eighth grade teacher of 100 plus students, I could not go much beyond the limits of my classroom walls and 45-minute periods, but in being responsible for only 10 students, I could get to know their parents to some extent, come to understand their hopes and expectations for their children. I learned to see my students through their own eyes and to help bridge the gap between their perception of school and the opportunities available to them there. TA was a special time in each busy day.

II. K E Y I N G R E D I E N T S

The activities which follow include ideas for TA submitted specifically for this collection by teachers from all over Vermont. On the last page, you will find a blank activity form to fill out. When we have heard from enough readers, we will compile Volume II of ONE TA TO GROW, PLEASE! In this way, VAMLE hopes to continue to provide fresh ideas for Vermont's teacher advisories.

May this workbook serve as a collective Thank-You to VAMLE members and others who submitted activities. A special thanks to Margaret Coulman at Middlebury Union Junior High School whose leadership, vision, and strength helped all of us to grow into our roles as TA's.

****
* GAME PARADE *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Each TA group selects an activity or game that would make money at a fair (Nintendo booth, arm wrestling, face painting, basketball throw, blow out candles with a squirt gun) and they set up a booth for other students to play that game. Each TA determines how many chips (pea beans) it will cost to play the game and how many chips will be paid out if a customer wins. The object is to have fun and play all TA group games. Each TA group member is given a specific number of chips to start and then each member returns the "winnings" to their TA group to make a group tally. The TA group with the most chips wins ice cream sundaes.

VARIATIONS:

PITFALLS:

Organizational - keeping students flowing from one activity to another

SUPPLIES:

TA supply their own depending on the game they select

RESULTS:

Students learn how to cooperate, devise a cost/win financial system, and have a wonderful time

CONTRIBUTED BY: Susan O'Brien
ADDRESS: Hinesburg, VT 05461
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SCHOOL: Hinesburg Elementary

WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

HOW TO PLAY:

Make a number line on the floor using tape or chalk, numbered from 1 to 10. Make a list of statements that should generate good discussions, i.e., "I like spending time with my family" or "people should be able to decide whether or not they want to use drugs". After you read each statement, have students decide where they belong on the number line (1 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree). Students stand on number and then the group members discuss why they chose the positions they did.

VARIATIONS:

Have the students write one statement each. Have students hold up "score cards" from 1 to 10.

PITFALLS:

Crowding on one number happens frequently. Some students wait to see where friends go before chosing a number. As in all discussions, some students talk all the time, others never speak up.

SUPPLIES:

Masking tape

RESULTS:

Students learn that having different opinions is not a bad thing. They also discover now things about each other and learn to respect those differences.

CONTRIBUTED BY: Susan Landgren
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PHONE: 453-4206
SCHOOL: Mount Abraham UHS

****
* "OUR TA WALL HANGING" *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

1) each student designs a square

2) square is made on paper (can be laminated to take home)

3) square is stenciled on cloth, signed, pressed to set color

4) each person must machine sew one border

5) teacher joined strips, backed it

6) each student got a chance to "tie"

7) vote on where to hang it

8) invite the principal in and have someone explain what they did

VARIATIONS:

Use crayons, etc., make a mural-type hanging

PITFALLS:

Students who move in during the year do not have a square

SUPPLIES:

stencils (they can be borrowed or made)
paint brushes
12" x 12" pieces of cotton
scraps to bind it
2 - 3 needles
heavy crochet cotton (to tie)
inexpensive blanket for backing

RESULTS:

"lots of PRIDE" all year
a collaborative effort early in the year - good idea

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SCHOOL: Winooski JR/SR HS

****
* TRIVIA *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Academic teachers each make up 30 questions and 5 bonus questions from their content area. Learning center makes up 30 and 5 questions of "general knowledge". Homerooms (advisories) compete. Each home room makes a flag which rotates from member to member. When it is your homeroom's turn, and you are holding the flag, you call for a category & number (ex-social studies #17) the social studies teacher reads the question. Correct answer earns one point for homeroom. Incorrect answer, question stays in play. At the end of agreed on time limit, same goes into bonus situation. Each homeroom chooses two representatives. They answer bonus questions and may converse before giving answers.

VARIATIONS:

PITFALLS:

Put downs, whispering of answers - we've had few problems. Guilty party costs team 1 point and turn.

SUPPLIES:

Questions, large newsprint with categories and numbers clearly listed. When a question is answered correctly, recorder crosses out that number under the appropriate category.

RESULTS:

We've used this as a year-end activity for three years now. Kids (6th graders) love it. We play for two periods 1 1/2 hours with one stretch break. This year kids complained when we "made" them stop to go to lunch. Our team consists of four academic teachers - math, science, English, social studies and learning center.

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****
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****

HOW TO PLAY:

Divide TA into two groups. Give each team a list of questions that can be answered/collected in the library. (i.e., what are the two meanings of "book worm?" or find a book with the word "love" in the title.) Give a 6-8 minute time limit. Items can be collected in paper bag for each team. Give small prize (bookmark, apple, penny candy) to all.

VARIATIONS:

People Scavenger Hunt. Rules: Find at least one person to fit each of the ideas below. Ask him/her to fill in the blank. No person should sign more than one item. You should introduce yourself first and then ask each person specific questions.

1) _____ is wearing pink, purple or orange socks (circle one).

2) _____ is an only child.

3) _____ hasn't lived in the same house all his/her life.

4) _____ has milked a cow.

5) _____ has a pet that is not a cat or dog.

6) _____ wasn't born in Vermont.

7) _____ has gone to summer camp.

8) _____ skis downhill, cross-country or snowmobiles (circle one).

PITFALLS:

Sometimes losing team needs a little reward too - this way everyone goes to class a little happier.

SUPPLIES:

Found in library

RESULTS:

Students seem to enjoy the competition and cooperate to win.

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****
* RENAME YOURSELF *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Pose the following to the students:

If I could choose to name myself I would be known as _____ because...

VARIATIONS:

Have students write names on paper and let other students try to match names correctly.

PITFALLS:

SUPPLIES:

RESULTS:

We did it after the students knew each other well. They all participated eagerly and enjoyed the resulting discussion.

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* FAVORITE THINGS *

HOW TO PLAY:

I use this activity at the beginning of the year as an "ice breaker." It gives us a forum for discussion as kids often like to compare and discuss their preferences. It also provides TA members with an awareness of each other.

Pass out index cards to each member of your TA. Have the student write his or her name on the card, then have them number the card from 1-10 (the number will depend on the number of "favorites" you want)

Dictate the name and the category of favorite. For instance say, "For number 1, write your favorite kind of food (movie, book, ice cream flavor)." You might try some humorous ones like, "For number 2, write your favorite person to spend a week alone in a rocket ship with." Or, "For number 3, write your favorite put down."

Come up with categories that don't give away the author, but could eventually reveal personalities. Make your categories a blend of simple; "your favorite color," and evocative, "your favorite age you have been."

Collect the cards and put them away for at least a week. Then, read them aloud, without revealing the name. See if the other members of the TA can guess who came up with those lists of favorites.

VARIATIONS:

You can put the cards away for a longer time. Sometimes even the authors don't recognize themselves from September to June.

I use this activity over an extended period of time, but you could do it in a few days by reproducing the lists of favorites in a kind of work sheet leaving a blank for the person's name.

During the TA portion of Open House, parents enjoy identifying their sons and daughters by hearing about their favorites. I play the game in much the same way as I do with the students, only they work on identifying their children.

PITFALLS:

Anyone who teaches Middle School children knows that there are definitely categories to stay away from.

Don't let the discussion occur while they are writing their responses. It takes too long, and of course can be very revealing.

Make a forced choice of favorites for a person to clarify and define, although your more creative thinkers often find it annoying to have to choose. You might want to let your kids list more than one favorite, but limit the responses both for expediency and priority.

SUPPLIES:

Index cards, pen or pencil

RESULTS:

The students will find out something about themselves and their TA members.

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****
* YOU'RE ON *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Cut out interesting pictures from magazines, newspapers, calendars, etc.

Lay them out in front of your TA members. Tell your TA that each member will have to choose a picture to talk about for three minutes, then have each select a picture that appeals to him/her. (I let the students choose the same picture if they want.)

See how long they can last making meaningful commentaries. (Cut them off at five minutes.) This is an introduction to oral speaking in front of a small group. Most kids have a harder time getting started than you might have thought.

VARIATIONS:

You might assign a picture to a student.

You can do the same with interesting objects.

You might do different things with the time limits.

You might want for all the TA members to ask questions if the speaker needs some help.

PITFALLS:

You will have to make your shy students feel safe and train your aggressive students not to take over.

SUPPLIES:

Fascinating pictures or objects

RESULTS:

In discussing the picture or object, the student generally reveals something of his or her personality. So in the stages of getting to know your TA, this provides a good activity. It is also educationally sound because it provides a much gentler audience for public speaking than an entire class would provide, while still giving the student an introduction to creative speaking.

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****
* ROOM NAME TAGS *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Each child is given colored paper of varying kinds, markers, crayons, and "wild" stickers to create a personal room assignment sign we hang on the hall outside our TA room. The sign was to symbolize them in color, theme and design. While each student worked on his/her creation the teacher informed and talked with each one getting a sense for each one's feelings, strengths and likes. Signs changed after each marking period.

VARIATIONS:

PITFALLS:

Believe it or not, kids misspelled their own name.

SUPPLIES:

Art media of any kind.

RESULTS:

Great interaction time! Improved as the year progressed with everyone knowing everyone else better and thus becoming more relaxed and honest.

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****
* THE PUZZLER *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

1) Take pictures of your school (property, building, etc.)

2) Send away to a company which makes jigsaw puzzles from photographs.

3) Kids work on these mystery puzzles during "quiet times" in classroom. (TA activity, too)

PITFALL:

Expensive processing, losing pieces, place to keep puzzle while in progress.

SUPPLIES:

Photography supplies - camera, film

RESULTS:

Some students seem to not only enjoy solving the "mystery" but doing the puzzles over and over.

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****
* FLASH *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

At the end of some units I presented in English (7th and 8th grades) in science (7th) the students wrote down a new word/term they had learned. I supplemented these with my own to get a "deck" of 52 "flash" cards; could use smaller "decks" than 52. I sat on a high stool at the front of the class and would hold up one card at a time. I could hear statements like, "Hey, I know the answer, that's my new word." For English they would write about their "new words" and talk about why they chose/liked them.

PITFALLS:

If done too often gets tedious.

SUPPLIES:

Heavy paper (large index cards), magic markers

RESULTS:

Students love flash cards! Even those students who might be timid seem to get "charged up" by the excitement of the class. Learning is contagious.

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****
* "TA TO TA" *
****

HOW TO:

One TA from one (middle) school makes/arranges with one TA from another middle school to visit for the day, each host TA person being paired with a visiting TA person. At the end of the school day each visitor goes home with his/her host. The next day when the visitors return home they take their hosts with them and the roles become reversed, with the first host school now being the visitors for this two day social experience. (We are also including the TA advisor in this exchange if possible.)

VARIATIONS:

PITFALLS:

Requires in-depth scheduling

SUPPLIES:

Bus transportation

RESULTS:

(We're going to try it this year!)

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****
* DOUBLE CIRCLES *
* (A Trust-Building Activity) *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Divide into 2 groups. Form an outside and an inside circle. Face each other in twos. Participate yourself if there is an odd number. Exchange names with partner. Tell each other what you would do with $50. Outer circle then moves to new partner on the right. Continue answering questions like the following, gradually working toward questions that require more disclosure:

1) If you could change your name, what would it be?
2) Who is your hero or heroine? Why?
3) What subject are you best at?
4) What is one thing that makes you happy?
5) What is your favorite food?
6) If you could live somewhere else, where would it be?
7) What is one thing you like about school? Dislike?
8) What is something you like about yourself?
9) What is your greatest strength or accomplishment?
10) What is one thing about yourself you would change?

VARIATIONS:

Questions could be adapted to subject matter.

PITFALLS:

Signal may be necessary to indicate time to change partners

SUPPLIES:

None

RESULTS:

Begins communication in new groups. Helps students identify similarities. Builds trust.

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THE NAME GAME

HOW TO PLAY:

Teacher advisor and advisees sit in a circle. The first person says his/her name and tells the group one thing about him/herself that no one in the group knows. The second person repeats the name and information of the first person and then adds his/her own name and news item. This continues, with each person repeating all of the previous names and information items, all the way around the circle.

ADAPTATIONS:

This game can be played in mime. It's called "I'm going to California." Each player repeats the statement, "I'm going to California, and I'm going to.. (here the player mimes an action.) Each subsequent person adds a mimed action, after repeating all of the action which have been mimed before.

This game can also be used as a review activity. Each student adds a fact about a topic, or a favorite part of a book, repeating all the facts which have preceded his/her own.

PITFALLS:

If there is a student who has a short term memory problem, be sure to start the group close to that student, so that s/he does not have a lot to remember. Kids love to see the teacher go last.

SUPPLIES:

None

RESULTS:

Builds support for one another. Helps kids to maintain eye contact in a comfortable way. Builds confidence in short-term memory. Helps build group spirit.

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****
* MAP READING *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Students work cooperatively in one or more groups to identify the route the driver will take on a field trip. As teacher advisor, pick a destination which is located in a place unfamiliar to students. Enlarge a road map to include all roads between school and the destination. Have students study the map and make decisions about the best route. Take students in a van, or, with help from another adult, in several cars. Drivers do not move the car or make any decisions about turns or roads unless there is a consensus among the members of the group who are riding in the car. Drivers take all directions from the group. If there is no consensus, driver pulls over and stops until the group can give him some more directions. There is some predetermined activity or reward at the destination.

ADAPTATIONS:

This activity works well in urban areas where there is a combination of types of transportation, including walking. Can also be played completely on foot. Suggestions for destinations include a swimming pond with swimming and snacks upon arrival; a roller skating rink; a pizza parlor; someone's house for video or activities.

PITFALLS:

You need to be sure there is a lot of time to actually carry out the game without adult intervention. Typically, a 45 minute trip can take 1 1/2 hours, with time taken for mistaken map reading, or failure to recognize actual turns, or lack of consensus.

SUPPLIES:

Road maps, pencils, paper, car, gas, driver, destination.

RESULTS:

Allows an opportunity for kids to show leadership. Map reading skills and transition from map to road skills often come out in kids who are not necessarily the most verbal in TA. Helps build comraderie in the group, as there is a feeling that they must work together in order to reach the destination. Provides advisor with wonderful observation time, because while kids work intensely together to solve the road map/direction puzzle, they often forget the presence of the silent driver.

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****
* THE WIND BLOWS WEST *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Place chairs randomly around the room. There is one less chair than player. The person who is "it" stands in the middle and says: "The wind blows west for people who are wearing sneakers." All students with sneakers must get up and move. They may not move to a chair which is adjacent to their own chair The person who is left starts the next round. "The wind blows west for anyone with earrings on..."

ADAPTATIONS:

Story tag. Scatter paper plates around the room. There is one less plate than players. The person who is it begins a story. When he/she says the words "And, then..." all players on plates must move. They may move anywhere except to an adjacent spot. The person left in the middle continues the story, until s/he gets to the words "And, then."

PITFALLS:

Kids move quickly and with a lot of energy and noise during this game. Be sure you have safe space, without a lot of sharp edges or furniture in the way. Expect a lot of noise.

SUPPLIES:

Chairs or paper plates

RESULTS:

Kids can expend some energy. The game is quick and can often be used as a break in between lessons or a treat at the end of a lesson. Also gives them a chance to argue without being violent when two have reached the same spot.

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****
* HALLOWEEN ACTIVITY - *
* TA PUMPKIN CARVING DECORATING CONTEST *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

1 entry per TA. Winners announced by categories (funniest, most creative, scariest, etc.) All pumpkins are created during TA time in advance of the holiday.

VARIATIONS:

Easter egg decorating - Ukranian style

PITFALLS:

Only 1 entrant per TA.

SUPPLIES:

Pumpkins, magic markers, carving knives if actually carved out. Can do Mr. Potato Head style, paints, brushes, examples of various faces/expressions; for eggs - wax crayons, dyes, spoons, cups, fine point paint brushes.

RESULTS:

Can foster creativity, artistic talent, teamwork and cooperative attitude. Recognition and spirit building also an advantage.

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****
* BLINDFOLD GAME *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

Provide blindfolds for each member of group. Instructions: group will not be allowed to talk or see in this exercise. Each person has a number whispered to them and the group has to arrange themselves in ascending or descending number order and give a sign that they have completed the task.

VARIATIONS:

Adaptable by group arranging themselves alphabetically by birth date, etc.

PITFALLS:

Noisy game; provide safe space where there are not sharp objects. Instruct kids to cross their arms as "bumpers." It is difficult to get kids not to talk. They sometimes need reminders of rules.

SUPPLIES:

Blindfolds

RESULTS:

A great cooperation, initiative game. Spot people who are leaders, maintainers, initiators.

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****
* KINDLING FUROR *
****

HOW TO PLAY:

In succession, kids and teacher take turns bringing into the advisory session a newspaper article, details about a televised item, or an actual event, or a shocking recent rumor - one student or teacher topic per session. To ensure success, the item must be at least somewhat controversial, or perhaps confusing. The TA group spends the session sharing opinions about the item, then clarifying the basis for their opinions. Teacher must keep discussion moving, but be sure no one is neglected or is abused for stating a personal opinion. Teacher helps students clarify their vision of the issue at hand.

VARIATIONS:

Share reactions to selected comic strips, current fads, favorite dreams, school-related issues, etc. If the group becomes relaxed and close through the year, personal dilemmas can be shared easily. Sample issues: AIDS, teen suicide, euthanasia, abortion, dress codes, drugs, types of music, etc.

PITFALLS:

Very controversial topics could require "kid-gloves" handling to deal with constructively. Individuals may feel criticized or isolated on the basis of their opinions unless the teacher acts to prevent such a problem. Noise!

SUPPLIES:

Newspaper article, notes or clear remembrances of a television show or movie, etc. Blackboard can be used to reinforce major concepts or to tally a straw vote. Later, others could rebut with opposing evidence.

RESULTS:

Respect for others' rights to hold opinions, however, different from one's own; respect for others' knowledge and experiences; focus on issues that matter to kids' lives (our ours!); kindling or reinforcement of friendships in a context of intense personal sharing; heightened self-esteem; articulation of values.

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VALENTINE'S DAY SECRET

HOW TO PLAY:

My sixth grade TA was in charge of a middle school Valentine's Day on a week long activity. Everyone drew the name of a classmate prior to the holiday. For five school days prior to Valentine's Day a card was made for their secret pal and mailed in a special mailbox outside our room. Each student had a locker which acted as a personal mailbox. Each TA was given a street address and each locker a number, i.e., 6 Lover's Lane or 12 Heartbreak Highway. Cards were delivered by my "mailmen" directly to each student. On Valentine's Day each secret pal signed his/her card revealing their identity. It was an effort to increase the self-esteem of all students. Copies of letters to students, parents, and teachers are available upon request. The idea is not original but came from a professional book, Kids Are Consumers Too.

VARIATIONS:

You could do something similar at Christmas time called "Secret Santa."

SUPPLIES:

Construction paper, markers and stickers were available in my room for all middle school students to use if they needed them.

RESULTS:

Valentine's Day is not a holiday that has traditionally been observed at our school in the middle school. It was nice to have a mid-winter activity. Except for the pitfall cited, the activity was successful and a positive experience for students as well as teachers.

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I I I. S P R I N K L E S

Here are some quick ideas which should help to spark an activity of your own. Let us know what you develop! See the last page for a blank form and an address for contributing to Volume II. These are activities from many different people in both in and out of Vermont.

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Bowling - My TA and invited friends went bowling and it was a very successful venture. The lanes were completely empty after school until a league at 5:00. We walked to the bowling alley, bowled two strings, and were out of the alley by 4:45. The cost was $.90 each string, plus $.35 shoe rental, for a total cost of $2.15. We dined afterward at MacDonalds. 5:30 was a good pick-up time. We reviewed how to score in TA, but most didn't learn it until they had to do it. I would highly recommend this activity as fun, easy to organize, inexpensive, inclusive of all ability levels, and good math practice. (Peggy Peabody, Middlebury Union Junior High School)

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Starting a Topic - What We Know/What We Want to Know. At the beginning of a discussion topic, have students write on the board what they know about the topic, in one list, and what they want to know in another list. Begin the topic discussion by talking about/sharing information about the "known items." Keep the list. Use it in developing further discussion on the topic. Bring the list our again at the end of the topic, to see it all questions were answered. (Ruth Allard, 200 Teaching Ideas, unpublished, 1979).

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Getting To Know You - Use a Polaroid Camera at the beginning of the school year. Take a picture of the first person into TA in the morning. Then hand the camera to that person to take a picture of the next and so on. It's a small but nice way for kids to get comfortable with each other. Most kids are delighted to use the camera and see the results of their handiwork immediately. Post the pictures on the bulletin board. Re-do every couple of months. (Carol Spencer)

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Roller Skating - I took my TA roller skating at least once each year. Each of my 12 students could invite 2 friends. I "juried" their selections, by personally talking with each of the invited guests about my rules and expectations. We took a school bus to the rink. By going on Friday afternoon, we were able to have the whole rink to ourselves for two hours. That's a comfortable amount of time. After skating, the bus made a stop at a local restaurant, with whom I had made arrangements ahead of time. It was a nice pizza place that didn't have a big Friday night trade. They were glad to have our business. The evening is an expensive, fun, social time. A nice opportunity for students who may not have other, obvious, outstanding skills as they help and teach others to skate. (Carol Spencer)

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Pizza Lunch - One of the most popular activities at Middlebury Union Junior High School is pizza lunch. Local pizzerias provide menus, kept by teachers and in the main office. TA's notify the lunch program coordinator that they will not be at lunch. Students organize the order-taking, money collection, and phone ordering of the pizza. Teacher, or teacher and selected students go downtown to pick up the pizza just before the lunch period. Sometimes other teachers cover the last few minutes of a class, or other teachers, with a prep period, offer to go. Pizza lunch is frequently held in the living arts room, where knives, forks, and napkins are made available. This is a quiet, social time which is pleasant, inviting and close. Sometimes we invite one friend each to lunch. (Middlebury Union Junior High School)

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Special Interest Days - Extend TA time from the normal time. Teachers offer a one-hour demonstration/workshop on a special topic (calligraphy, kite-making, aerobics, etc.). Students sign up for these in advance and spend the TA time being introduced to one new skill. (Desert View Middle School)

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Sparklerettes - Here is an even quicker list of common sense ideas for what the Desert View Middle School Curriculum calls "Campus Day Activities." Some come from their list, and some come from Middlebury Union Junior High teachers.

1. Button Day
2. Radio Day
3. Pep Rallies
4. Hat Day
5. Beach Day
6. School Color Day
7. Campus Clean-Up Day
8. Dress-Up Day
9. 50's Dress-Up Day
10. December Dwarf

11. Thematic Door Decorating
12. T-Shirt Day
13. Western Day
14. Candy-gram deliveries
15. Teacher/Staff Baby Contest
16. Practice school cheers
17. Learn school song
18. Polls (top ten 10 school - e.g. radio stations)
19. Elections/discussions
20. Student Council news and feedback to council
21. Game Day
22. Sustained Silent Reading
23. Journal writing to TA
24. Assembly Procedures/ behavior/attendance
25. Career Dress-Up Day
26. Famous person in history dress-up day
27. Canned food drive
28. Quarterly locker cleanout
29. Book talks
30. Reading aloud a continuous story
31. Write letters to one person who meant/means a lot
32. Book Covering Day
33. Know your school speakers
34. Introduce local traditions
35. Personal goal setting day
36. Treasure Hunts
37. Degrassi JH TV Series/ discussions
38. Ping Pong
39. Kit Flying
40. Gym Time
41. Cooking Snacks/Breakfast
42. Aerobics
43. String Games

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Community Service Project - Charlotte Central is a K-8 school with advisories in grades 6-8. This year we've initiated the idea of a community service project for advisories. The project may take place either in or outside the school and during or after school hours. A few of the activities that have been suggested include: helping elementary grade students with their garden project; visiting the local child care center and presenting stories or activities; assisting cafeteria staff with clean-up after lunch; visiting elderly community members in nursing homes; helping at the Humane Society with pet care; assisting the librarian to prepare for inventory. (Diane Downer, Charlotte Central School)

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Hoo-Haa Activities - Peter Straub of Mount Abraham Union High School is a master at teaching teachers how to create spirited TA competition activities. At his school, these are used as in-between activities for spirit assemblies, calling down different TA groups to compete in good fun. No scores are kept. Here are some of the activities he has adapted and created:

1) Group balloon crush - In groups of 4 or 5, hold each other by the shoulders and crush the balloons.

2) Balloon races - have pairs of people go across the gym, hands behind back, with balloons perched between foreheads, stomachs, and rear-ends.

3) Bat spin - Have individuals run down to a vertical bat, place forehead on top end, spin around ten times, and then try to return to place in a straight line.

4) Toilet paper roll - have each person roll out and roll back in a roll of toilet paper.

5) Egg Toss.

6) Water balloon toss.

7) Chubby bunny - have a student at a microphone. Feed him/her marshmallows one at a time. Each time, the student must say chubby bunny clearly.

8) Taped spoons - tape four spoons together. Have two people carry up, with a marshmallow in it, spoon in mouth. Relay. Two other people pick up clean ends with their mouths at the other end.

9) Bubble blowing contest - don't forget the calipers.

10) Chair sit/lap sit - Either start with a chair, or form a circle and just sit on laps. If you start with a chair, don't forget the tip that sitting on the front of the knees, with feet turned in, helps balance.

11) Schmerlz toss - tie two tennis balls into the end of a sock. Have students toss and catch the schmerlz.

12) Dog sled - team of 3 people. One sits on the towel, lengthwise. The other two pull it along the gym floor, as the sitting person holds into the towel between his/her legs.

13) Banana pass - line up chairs facing each other - 2 teams. Pass a banana along the row of people. Every hand must touch the banana. When the banana reaches the end, the person at the end races up to the first chair; everyone moves down one chair. Team which can get back to its original seating wins.

14) Cotton ball drop - Vaseline on nose. Pick up cotton ball from one chair. Try to drop on to another.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Opening - Create a bulletin board display with the group TA pictures that come back from the yearbook photographer's. Identify a theme for the bulletin board. An example: each TA must place its picture behind something so that it has to be opened up to see the photograph. A list of possible "openings," is: eyelash, trunk, car door, piano, window & curtains, sewer lid, future, wallet, mailbox, cupboard, banana, flower, tent flaps, pocketbook mouth, zipper. Each TA group creates the display which is then joined with the others for one large display of pictures. (Doug Churchill, Camels Hump Middle School)

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Ball Toss - Students stand in a circle and each student introduces him/herself once. The teacher tosses the ball to a student, saying the student's name. The student repeats this by tossing it to another student, saying that student's name. Play until folks are comfortable with everyone's name. (Susan Pelley, Suncook, New Hampshire)

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Divide and Conquer - Once students know each other's names, getting to know things about each other helps to break the ice. This activity does that quickly and in a physically active way. Anyone can be the leader who shouts out pairs of opposites. "Those of you who like morning stand on my right. Those of you who like evening stand on my left." The list can be endless - pizza - steak; mountains - ocean; school - vacation; brothers and sisters - pets; odd jobs - no jobs; outdoor movies - video movies. The advantage is students see that others have similar interests that can help ignite a conversation later. (Susan Pelley, Suncook, New Hampshire)

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Potpurri - Chuck Cerasoli, from Shelburne Middle School sent in this collection of activities, written by some of his adult students.

Stems - Ann Messier

Objective: To structure positive group responses using sentence stems. Any student should be allowed to pass. Use only one stem per session. Choose one which is relevant to the day's session.

Time: 10 minutes per stem

Directions:

1) Ask students to form a circle with you.

2) Explain that you are going to start a sentence and you would like for each student in turn to complete it. If a student chooses to pass, make passing acceptable.

3) Give an example by saying the sentence stem; then repeat the sentence stem and complete it yourself. (Your completion will model for the students.)

4) In a structured way (left to right) ask each student to say the start of the sentence (important) and then complete it.

Examples:

Teacher: (stem) "I feel good when..."
Teacher: (completion) "I feel good when people say positive things to me."
Student: "I feel good when..." (Ask student to make stem into a full sentence)
Student: "I feel good when I go home."

Stems:

One thing I like about me_____.
One thing that makes me happy_____.
I am proud that I_____.
I feel good when_____.
I get excited when_____.
My clothes say that I'm_____.
Something I do well_____.
My greatest strength is_____.
Someone I'd like to be like_____.
I feel comfortable when_____.
I'm good at_____.
I feel different from other people because_____.
I react when I'm successful by_____.

Something which gives me a feeling of power_____.
Seeing good results in my behavior_____.
When I feel I've done a good job I_____.
My favorite way to get praise is_____.
My way to get attention from others is_____.
The way I solved a problem I had was_____.
Something I'd like to change about myself_____.

Source: Bormaster, Jeffrey and Carol Lou Treat. Talking, Listening, Communicating, Austin, Texas: Pro-Ed, 1982, page 8.

Advisory Group Activity - Linell Emery

Objective: 1) To all students to get to know other members in the group
2) To allow students to trust other members with something that is important to them

Activity: Day 1 - Students (and advisor) pair off. Each member has with him or her something that is important to the person (a rabbit's foot, stuffed animal, picture). An explanation is given of the object and its importance to the partner. The object is then entrusted to the partner for 24 hours. The partner in turn does the same with his or her object. Each partner explains the object's importance to someone else during the next 24 hour period (friend, teacher, family member).

Day 2 - Class shares stories of the entrusted object.

Advisory Group Activity - Chris Canosa

Objective: To allow students to continue to get to know each other.

Materials: pens, paper, hat or container

Activity: 1) Have each student write down the best Christmas (or birthday) present that they ever received.
2) Fold the papers and place them in a hat (or other container).
3) Each student should pick from the hat.
4) Go around the table and have each student guess who received the present and why they think so.

Advisory Group Activity - Sue Peryea

Objective: To demonstrate the effectiveness of working together in a problem-solving task.

Materials: Need at least six participants
List of riddles for each.

Activity: 1) Distribute list of riddles to each; have each person work independently for 2-3 minutes.

2) Have students pair-up to solve problems for 2-3 minutes.

3) Have each pair combine efforts to solve puzzles.

Challenge: Any team that finishes early can make up their own puzzle while waiting for others to finish.

Discussion: Ask how members felt working alone, in pairs, in small groups. Discuss what it means to work as a team.

Riddles List:

1)
O
Ph.D.
M.A.
B.A.

2)

3)
LE
VEL

4)
J
YOU U ME
S
T

5)
W
O
R
H
T

6)
T
O
W
N

7)
R
E
T
T
A
B

8) HE'S HIMSELF

9)
CRAZY
YOU

10)
OATH
UR

Answers:

1) Three degrees below zero
2) See-through blouse
3) Split level
4) Just between you and me
5) Throw up
6) Downtown
7) Batter up
8) He's beside himself
9) Crazy over you
10) You are under oath

Advisory Activity: Wishes - Carol Weinert

Objective: To build self-esteem through a project helping others by giving of themselves.

Materials: Paper, markers

Directions:

1) Explain to the group that there are children and adults in our community that have very little. Some children do not have enough warm clothing, food, or toys. (A list of those needing help could be listed on the board.)

2) Distribute paper and markers and have students write a wish to something that you would like someone less fortunate to have. Place this on the front of the card. (Example: I wish a child could have a pair of warm mittens for the holidays.)

3) On the inside of the card write what you would take off your holiday list so that that gift would be possible.

4) Present the card to your parents and explain to them that instead of buying the gift they planed, could you please buy something for a less fortunate person.

5) Plan to bring in the gifts and distribute through an organization such as the Food Shelf or Toys for Tots or a Home for the Elderly.

Group Advisory Activity - Joan

You each have $1.50 to spend on words that you feel best describe you as a person. Please make a list of those words and total them.

$.20 Beautiful	$.15 Sincere	$.15 Successful
.15 Friendly	.25 Dependable	.20 Creative
.25 Honest	.20 Intelligent	.25 Understanding
.25 Generous	.15 Careful	.20 Sensitive
.15 Pleasant	.20 Polite	.20 Happy
.20 Helpful	.25 Thoughtful	.15 Charming
.25 Fun	.25 Humorous	.20 Interesting
	.25 Talented	

Objectives: 1) To encourage students to think about themselves in a positive manner.

2) To help the group participants get to know each other better.

Activity: 1) Each member of the group is given a few minutes to work on activity.

2) The group comes back together and each person gives the words they feel best describe them. They may tell why they picked these words if they wish.

Advisory Group Activity - Belonging to a Group - Pete Tomasi

Objective: To understand the emotions we experience when we belong to a group. To understand our goals when we wish to join a group.

Materials: Paper circles (10" diameter), magic markers

Activity: 1) Pass out materials

2) Fold circle into four sections

3) Define the word "group"

4) Explain the meaning of a symbol

5) In each of the four sections, going clockwise, draw a symbol for the following:

A) the group in which you belong and are valued

B) the feeling you have because you are part of the group

C) a group to which you wish to belong

D) what you would have to do, or become, to be part of this group

6) Have students work in pairs to guess the meaning of each other's symbols

7) Discuss the differences in the feelings that students have when they belong, compared to when they don't belong. Discuss the goals they have set in order to attain entrance to a group.

Resource: (available in Guidance)

Belonging To A Group, Guidance Associates, Communications Park, Box 300, White Plains, New York 10600

Advisory Group Activity - Evelyn Fleisher

Objective: 1) Introduction of members in the group

2) Build self-image

Materials: Paper & pencils, list of adjectives (optional)

1) Have each member of the group write their name in a column along the side of a piece of paper.

2) Briefly discuss adjectives and hand out list if needed.

3) Have each group member write an adjective for each letter in their name which begins with that letter. Example: Petty, amber hair, tall

4) Have each group member introduce themselves and share their adjectives if they wish.

Example list: adorable, caring, energetic, helpful, kind, comical, cheerful, happy, silling, inspiring, brave, bold, hopeful, lucky

Advisory Group Activity - Kathleen Rogers

Objective: To demonstrate a variety of emotions

To recognize a variety of emotions

Materials: 3" X 5" cards with feeling names written on either:

- hats to attach card to, or
- tape to attach cards to back

Description of activity: The leader either passes a hat to each person, or tapes a card to each person's back. MAKE SURE THE ADVISEE DOES NOT SEE THE WORD ON THEIR CARD. The other advisees must not tell them what it says.

1) Choose a starter.

2) The remainder of the group studies the emotion/feeling written on their card.

3) In turn each person responds; to the starter with a statement or motion that demonstrates the feeling on the starters card. They must not use the word, or a synonym.

Example: If the starter's card was excitement - the response might be "I got a great date for the Prom!"; for jealousy - "You always think you're so smart!"

4) After the first two responses, the starter may guess the emotion/feeling. It they are right, a new starter is chosen. Otherwise, the responses continue.

Suggested feelings/emotions:

excitement	fear	joy
depressed	sad	happy
worried	angry	jealous
frustrated	misunderstood	anxious
lonely	left out	hurt

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Eight Games Kids Love To Play - Pam Tyler shared these games with a group at the National Middle School Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1984. Some (*) are based on games found in THE NEW GAMES BOOK, by the New Games Foundation, edited by Andrew Fluegelman, and published by Doubleday.

Get Acquainted Circle - Each member tells name and one word to associate with her (e.g., Pam/volleyball), then repeats all the names and words given so far around the circle. The last person tries to name everyone (a good spot for the teacher to be).

Partner Stand - Pair sits with backs together and knees bent. They hook elbows. Pushing back against each other, they rise to a stand.

Lap Sit* - STEP ONE: Group all forms a tight circle standing with sides to center, all facing the same direction (either clockwise or counter clockwise). At the count of three, each person sits down, balancing on the lap of the person behind him/her while providing a lap for the person in front of him/her.

STEP TWO: On the count of three, each person takes one step with their right leg; next count of 3, step with left leg, etc. Count number of steps group can accomplish and each time activity is done try to surpass former record. Class competitions could be fun!

Knots* - Groups of five or six hold hands in a circle and tangle themselves up into "knots" without letting go of hands. "Mr/s Tangle" (teacher or students or both) comes around and gives instructions on how group should untangle itself. (ALTERNATE ACTIVITY: Group solves the untangling problem itself...leaders are discovered.)

Cinnamon Roll - Form one large circle by holding hands. Break at one point and have one end person start spiraling around inside the circle until a center is formed and one big hug is had! Then center person ducks under and weaves out, pulling (gently) in line of kids behind him/her until circle has unwound. (Must be repeated to get everyone back facing the center of the circle...)

Atom - Teacher calls out "Atom _____," filling in a number in the space. Kids must form group of that size, join hands in the group, and sit on the floor. Kids not in a group are "out." So are kids in groups of the wrong size that have sat down. Continue until only 3 or 5 kids are left and call them the "winners." Start again!

If You - Kids sit in a circle in desks or on chairs. Teacher makes up If/Then phrases such as, "If you ate cold cereal this morning, then move three seats to your left." Students for whom this is true get up, move 3 seats left, and sit in the lap of the person who is there if you are using chairs. If you are using desks, they must be touching the desk or someone "in" it.

"If You" can get gradually more personal...depending on the group and your rapport with them. Some examples: "if you're getting an A in math..." - "If you've ever been kicked out of class..." - "If you've ever been kissed..." - "If you've ever thought about running away..." etc. But starting with innocuous phrases ("If you're wearing blue jeans...") is advised.

ESP Game - Assign a number to each student. Kids sit in a circle in random order, facing the center, with one person in the center who is "it." The center person must continue walking around the inside of the circle. The teacher calls a pair of numbers. Those two kids have to communicate to each other who they are and swap seats. The objective of the person who is "it" is to "steal" one of those seats while those two people are swapping. (Set a time limit for the seat exchange.)

Wink'em - Kids sit in a circle. Pass out secret pieces of paper with O's on them, but put W's on one or two. The object here is for the W's to "Wink-out" all the players before anyone left "alive" guesses who the Winker(s) is/are. When played with more than one Winker, guessers must guess both Winkers. If a guesser guesses incorrectly, he/she is Winked-out automatically. Winked-out players should expire noisily! (sometimes called "Killer")

Snake Tag* - One person begins as "it." When someone else is tagged, "it" becomes a two person snake, with the most-recently-caught section of the snake doing the tagging. Sections of the snake must stay together by holding hands. The snake can attempt to trap or capture people, but only that last person tagged can do the tagging. The game is over when everyone is part of the snake!

Quiet Ball - Amazing! My kids have loved this game! They sit on the table or desk tops and the ball is tossed around the room at random. The reacher "refs." It you talk, you're "down" (out). If you drop a good throw, you're down. These are judgment calls in many cases, and if it's made clear in the beginning that the call will not be changed, there won't be arguments. (Besides, it you talk, you're out!) I have my own rules about what we call "bullets" and feet touching the ground, etc. You'll decide what works best in your classroom. I encourage strategy rather than power. A wonderfully relaxing break in a busy morning. Play with the kids; it's fun!

Rocks, Paper, Scissors* (Outdoors) - A new version of an old game. The traditional game is played, but in teams. The two teams huddle, deciding as a group what their call will be. They then line up facing each other, about five yards apart. The teacher leads the chant: Rock, Paper, Scissors, (their team choice!). If the team has lost, they turn around and run to their safety line. The winning team gives chase to the losers, attempting to catch by tagging those losers and adding them to the winning team. This continues until everyone is on the same team! (In the event both teams choose the same word, they rehuddle and begin that round again.)

Elephant, Rhino, Giraffe - Students stand facing into the center of the circle. There's someone in the center who's "it." That person points at one of the people in the circle, commands "elephant!" or one of the other animals, and counts to ten. The response to this is from 3 people in the circle: the person pointed AT and the two people on either side of that person. They must "form" the commanded animal before "it" counts to ten. If one of the three doesn't make the required motions in time, he or she is the new "it." Students can make up their own animals.

Who's the Leader? - One person (the guesser) leaves the room. The remaining group silently chooses a leader who starts a motion (rubbing belly, patting head, etc.). The guesser is called in; the leader keeps changing the motion until the guesser guesses who the leader is!

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Dr. James W[illegible], a longtime speaker for the New England League of Middle Schools or T.A.'s, submitted this discussion activity from Coleystown Middle School in Westport, Connecticut.

Stresses///Pressures///Caring

1) How are things in 8th grade? What are the issues, concerns, etc. that you would like the teachers to discuss? (example, the teachers have been discussing when tests, quizzes, homework, etc. are due to try to "balance" out the load. Ask students if they see this reflected in their experience.)

2) Report cards will be issued next week (hopefully in time for the Thanksgiving holiday). What kinds of pressures/stresses do report cards cause for you? What will you do if you get a grade lower than you expect? How will you deal with your parents and teachers if this happens? (Advisors, please remind your students that new report card procedure has been instituted, and that there might be errors. Encourage them to see their teacher first to check if there was a marking error that caused the unusually low grade.)

3) How many of you think that you will make honors (first or second?) Do you feel pressure to make honors? Is there a sense of pressure between kids that made honors and those that don't?

4) How important is the effort mark to you? To your parents? To your teachers?

5) With the holiday season coming, many people feel increased stress and pressure. Do you think you will feel this way? (Advisors may want to hold this question until later in December.)

6) At a recent meeting held at a local high school with 9th/10th graders, many students reported that they felt that their teachers were not concerned about them as students, and did not seem to care about teaching, How do you feel about your teachers at Coleytown in this regard? (Advisors may want to ask your kids to write their responses and discuss them anonymously.)

7) If you are feeling more stressed and pressured, or if you feel that your teachers don't understand where you are, what can YOU do to turn things around? (Advisors, a general discussion may be in order here. (Focus on individual problem solving strategies that may be brought out.)

Feelings About Report Cards

1) My last report card was _____.

2) My next report card will be _____.

3) Report cards make me feel _____.

4) I liked _____ better than my other classes because _____.

5) I like _____ less than my other classes because _____.

6) If I am doing well in a class I _____.

7) If I am doing poorly in a class, I _____.

8) The first thing I look for on my report card is _____.

9) The first thing my parents look for on my report card is _____.

10) I believe I study _____.

11) My parents believe I study _____.

12) The amount of homework I do is _____.

13) My parents think the amount of homework I do is _____.

14) My teachers think the amount of homework I do is _____.

15) I think I should socialize _____.

16) My parents think I should socialize _____.

17) I would like to change my report card by _____.

18) Summary

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Who and Where - Good questions to use as a group discussion starter are: WHO: gives you a lift; would you like to see right now; always listens to you; is the best teacher you ever had and why; has been a help to you in your life; do you admire, is your parents' age; has recently done you a good deed; would you love to call on the phone right now. And, WHERE? would you like to go back to for a week; did you last laugh until it hurt; away-from-home do you feel right at home; would you like to go out to eat; would you like to go outdoors for a day? (Ruth Allard, 200 Teaching Ideas, 1979)

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IV. TEACHER ADVISORY PROGRAM AT DESERT VIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL, EL PASO, TEXAS, AND ACTIVITIES FROM THE DESERT VIEW PROGRAM

(This information is reprinted with the permission of Desert View Middle School, El Paso, Texas.)

THE DESERT VIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL

INTRODUCTION

In the process of making a transition to a middle school philosophy, teachers from the Ysleta Independent School District, in El Paso, Texas, wrote a comprehensive curriculum guide for their emerging teacher advisory program. The guide has two parts, "7th Grade Advisory Period Curriculum Guide," and "8th Grade Advisory Period Curriculum Guide." The description of the program which follows is taken directly from the "Curriculum Guide." It represents an organized, structured Teacher Advisory Program, with required topics in the various areas of social development, school adjustment, emotional growth and study skills. Within the framework of the required topics, teaches have a great deal of latitude to choose activities which they feel best suit the needs of their group. these might be activities from the set of "scripts" included in the guide, or they might be activities which the teachers themselves make up. In a recent phone interview, the Principal, Nick Pike, explained as an example, that within the area of emotional development, for instance, a teacher might decide to show an episode of "Degrassi Junior High," the PBS series depicting life at a typical junior high school. Then, with the help of the written guides provided by PBS, the teachers might spend the two days per week slotted for activities in the emotional development curriculum, discussing the problems and motivations of the characters, rather than choosing one or more of the emotional development activities in the curriculum guide. Nevertheless, teachers have committed themselves to the topical outline. They do this through a campus-based committee.

The job of the ongoing advisory committee is to collect staff evaluations of the activities in the guide, and staff reflections on how each topical unit has proceeded. The committee then recommends to the staff any changes in the topical unit for the following year, and any additions or omissions to the scripted activities. Each summer, representatives from each campus committee in the district get together to revise the "Curriculum Guide."

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals

Recognizing that experiences in the middle grade years are critical in the development of interests, attitudes, and habits which related to success in later life, the advisory program has the following goals:

1) To assist students with their orientation and adjustment to the middle school setting.

2) To provide students with academic and social counseling.

3) To help students better understand themselves and their relationships with others.

4) To help improve their study skills.

5) To help students to explore future educational and career opportunities.

Objectives

The students will be provided a designated advisor/advisee time period free from interruptions that is designed:

1) To foster a feeling of belonging and self worth.

2) To enable the student to recognize and strengthen unique intellectual capabilities.

3) To develop positive attitudes toward academic subject.

4) To encourage student participation in activities that enhance communication.

5) To provide understanding of self in relation to career options.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT ADVISORY PROGRAMS

1. What is the Advisory Program?

The advisory program is a purposefully planned period of time in which the social and emotional concerns of the transescent are addressed. The advisory period is one vehicle for communication and student development to be sustained and supported by a caring adult, the teacher/advisor.

2. How is the Advisory Program different from academic classes?

Advisory period is different from academic classes in the following ways:

A) It is designed to promote the affective development of middle school students,

B) It is non-graded,

C) The teacher assumes the role of a caring adult to enhance the student's social and emotional development,

D) The student is provided a secure classroom environment to question, explore, inquire, and discuss their personal concerns.

3. What role does the teacher play as an advisor?

The teacher serves as an advocate, friend, and a person to whom the student can turn to for advice, understanding, and caring on a daily basis.

4. What role does the guidance counselor play in the Advisory Program?

A great human resource in the middle level school is the guidance counselor. The following are suggested topics for collaboration between the advisor and the guidance counselor:

- Resources for effective activities
- Identification of students with special needs
- Coordinate and/or present advisory period activities
- Provide individual, small group, and large group counseling

5. What is the weekly schedule, Monday-Friday in advisory period?

In order to achieve maximum effectiveness, the Ysleta Independent School District implements the advisory program every day, five days a week. Small group discussion activities occur twice a week, with sustained silent reading for one day and a teacher directed study period another day. The fifth day is designed for the individual campus needs, such as pep rallies, intramurals, club meetings, etc.

6. What concepts are included in the curriculum guide for the classroom discussion activities?

The seventh grade topics include:

A) Orientation/get acquainted (8 activities)
B) Study skills (8 activities)
C) Emotional
D) Transition-in/or orientation to their new environment
E) Social (16 activities)
F) Physical development
G) Future

The eighth grade topics include:

A) Orientation
B) Study skills
C) Social
D) Emotional
E) Future
F) Transition-in/Getting Ready for High School

FIVE DAY CYCLE

In order to achieve maximum effectiveness, the advisory period should occur every day, five days a week. Script activities should occur twice a week, with sustained silent reading (SSR) for one day, directed study period another day, and the fifth day will accommodate individual campus needs such as pep rallies, intramurals, club meetings, handling of fund raisers or other types of activities. (See calendar on Page 11.)

Scripts

The SCRIPT is a key factor in the advisor/advisee program. It is the script that supports the logic of this belonging school life support program.

The OBJECTIVE carries the message of the main idea under discussion.

The QUESTIONS support the investigation of the concept under investigation.

The EVALUATION will call for immediate feedback in relation to the student involvement with advisor/advisee activity and provide for total program evaluation.

The scripts are divided into sections. The teacher (advisor) will select the script s/he wants to direct for the two activity (script) days per week following the sequence on the calendar.

DEFINITIONS

Sustained Silent Reading - is a designated time during which the ENTIRE SCHOOL READS SILENTLY from material of one's own choosing. The objective of a successful reading program is getting students to read, read, read. This objective can be achieved by having students read in a twenty minute advisory period.

The format follows:

1) Each individual selects a book of their own choice (for one learns to read books by reading books).

2) A reading period of 20 minutes (or whatever amount of time chosen) will be provided without interruption.

3) One cannot change books during this reading time; therefore, one must choose wisely.

4) No one can talk or participate in any manner which might prevent others from sustaining themselves for the period of time chosen.

5) One cannot ask for any help from anyone during this time, including the teacher.

6) No one should look at the clock or at the teacher for completion, but will keep their nose in the book until the teacher halts the period.

7) The teacher will also read uninterruptedly (as will every other individual on the campus), sustaining themselves over a period of time with a book of their own choice.

8) There will be no book reports, tests, reviews, etc., required. Reading during this time is a very personal thing with each individual, and it need not be shared.

Directed Study Period - Students may use these days to complete homework assignments or projects working individually or in small groups. The advisor should provide appropriate instruction on study skills and academic concerns. Questions that would direct students' study time follow:

1) Do you know what academic activities you will complete during this time? If not, list them.

2) Are you prepared with the materials needed to complete your assignments? Do you need reference materials to complete your assignments?

3) Do you have enough assignments to work on for the entire study period?

4) If you have more than one academic assignment, have you divided your study time equally?

5) What is the appropriate student conduct required so that each student has an equal opportunity to complete the assignments to the best of their ability?

Campus Days - These will be used for school business such as pep rallies, club meetings, fund raisers, etc. The students will participate in activities which the school has designated as important. To help students direct these activities, the advisor should ask the following questions:

1) What activities do you see happening on this day?

2) Why should students be involved in school day activities?

3) What contributions can you make to school day activities?

4) How can you suggest additional activities that could happen on this day?

5) What makes you feel good about this school?

CAMPUS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Each campus should have an advisory committee which meets at least twice monthly (or as often as is deemed necessary by the committee). This committee should include one administrator, one counselor*, and three middle school teachers (from different disciplines).

The advisory committee will have the following responsibilities:

1) Implement campus inservice.

2) DIscuss problems concerning the implementation of the advisory period and make recommendations for solutions to the faculty.

3) Determine topics/activities for the one-day, school-wide activity

4) Determine the calendar for each six weeks.

5) Recommend changes or additional scripts when appropriate (use following blank script page).

6) Plan for ongoing exchange of ideas and periodic inservice.

7) Provide assistance to new faculty members as well as substitutes.

8) Complete a periodic evaluation of the advisory period.

*The counselor serving on this committee shall be the liaison between the counseling office and the advisory committee, serving as a resource to the teachers.

UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Study Skills 7th Grade	Class Assignment Record	#SS-7

OBJECTIVES

Students will organize their content area homework assignments by completing a daily assignment sheet.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Assignment Sheet (6 Different Types--Choose 1)	Large Group

PROCEDURE

1. Tell students today's activity will focus on study skills (organization).
2. Read questions 1-6 orally. Discuss/clarify.
3. Pass out an assignment sheet to each student. Attached are six types of assignment sheets from which to choose.)
4. Show students how to fill out the assignment sheet. Model.
5. Have students put their assignment sheet in their notebook. Tell them you will be checking them later in the week to see if they are using them to organize their homework assignments.
6. Check students' assignment sheets later in the week.
7. Praise students for using assignment sheets. You may even want to use a reward system for those who use the assignment sheets in the beginning (optional).
8. Have students summarize the importance of maintaining an assignment notebook.

QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever used an assignment sheet?
2. Why should you have a list of your assignments?
3. How would you use an assignment sheet?
4. How do you record information on an assignment sheet?
5. What information would you record?
6. How would this assignment sheet help you remember your homework?

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ___Yes ___No

To the student? ___Yes ___No

UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Study Skills 7th Grade	Let's Get Your Notebook Organized	#SS-8

OBJECTIVES

Students will analyze their own organizational skills by participating in a class discussion.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Students' notebooks	Large Group

PROCEDURE

1. Have students take out one of their notebooks.
2. Read questions 1-5 orally. Discuss/clarify.
3. Say, "Let's think together, as a group, about the qualities that make up an organized) useful notebook." Elicit responses which may include the following words: title, name, separate sections, assignment sheet, etc.
4. Ask, "Do you waste valuable time because you are not organized? How can you be better organized?"
5. Summarize by asking students what recommendations they would make when organizing a notebook.

QUESTIONS

1. Could someone else find something easily in your notebook? Can you?
2. How have you organized it?
3. How do you know what subject it is for?
4. Do you have separate sections for classwork and homework?
5. Do you keep an assignment list, or any other special sections in your notebook?

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ____Yes ____No

To the student? ____Yes ____No

UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Study Skills 7th Grade	Using Note-Taking Skills	#SS-9

OBJECTIVES

Students will discuss note taking and the various skills needed to take effective notes.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Activity Sheet: Using Note-Taking Skills	Lg./Sm. Group

PROCEDURE

1. Explain the difference between a sentence and a phrase.
2. Review the steps of good note taking:
   A. Listen attentively--don't let your mind wander.
   B. Ask questions when you don't understand something.
   C. Make your handwriting legible.
   D. Write only key ideas in phrase form.
   E. Organize and re-read your notes later.
3. Pass out activity sheet and allow students to complete ditto.
4. Break into smaller groups and discuss answers and the best way to take notes.
5. Make an "I learned . . ." statement about note taking and share responses with the whole class.

QUESTIONS

1. What is a phrase? A sentence?
2. What are the advantages of taking notes in sentence form? Phrases?
3. What are the disadvantages of taking notes in sencence form? Phrases?
4. How do you take notes?
5. What did you learn from this activity?

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ___Yes ___No

To the student? ___Yes ___No

USING NOTE-TAKING SKILLS

NAME _____ DATE _____

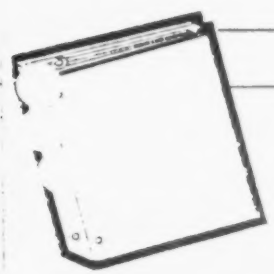
Research for reports requires writing facts from different sources of information. This process is called **taking notes.**

Write sentence notes on the following paragraph:

> Astronauts perform many duties on a space flight. They gather important information about outer space. The astronauts conduct experiments about weather conditions on Earth. They also follow a regular exercise program. In addition they perform medical tests for reactions of humans to outer space. During the entire trip the astronauts send the information on all the experiments back to the control center on Earth.

Write phrase notes on the following paragraph:

> Many science-fiction writers have written about life on other planets. One writer tells how the planet Mercury slowly melted. Other writers have described Venus as a very wet planet. Sometimes life on Mars is described as being much like on Earth. Some stories tell about poisonous gases on Saturn and Uranus.



UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Physical 7th Grade	AIDS--It's Everybody's Problem Part I	#P-7

OBJECTIVES

The students will learn the basic facts about AIDS by participating in a role-playing activity and class discussion.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Activity sheet, Pen/Pencil	Large Group

PROCEDURE

1. Tell students that today's activity will focus on learning the basic facts about AIDS.
2. Read questions 1-3. Discuss/clarify.
3. Ask student volunteers to participate in the role-playing activity. Allow a few minutes for preparation.
4. Summarize by asking students to review some of the basic facts about AIDS.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is AIDS always in the news?
2. Should AIDS be something to be concerned about? Why?
3. What is the first step in preventing AIDS? (Educate ourselves)

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ____Yes ____No

To the student? ____Yes ____No

ROLEPLAY SITUATIONS

#1

OVERHEARD BY THE LOCKERS . .

Student #1 - AIDS? Alex has AIDS? You mean Jamie's big brother, Alex?

Student #2 - That's what he's got. Jamie and I talked at the hospital. Alex won't be going back to college...at least, it doesn't look that way now.

Student #1 - Is he gay?

Student #2 - He's really sick, that's what he is, you jerk!

Student #1 - Weren't you scared to be with him?

Student #2 - Jamie's my friend. So's Alex.

Student #1 - Did you touch him?

Student #2 - He was pretty shook up. I hugged him, sure. And don't give me that look--you can't get AIDS from hugging a friend! I'm going back to see him when he goes home next week--you coming?

#2

OVERHEARD IN THE GYM . . .

Student #1 - Would you shake hands with somebody who has AIDS?

Student #2 - Sure I would. Didn't you hear what the school nurse said? Not through "casual contact." You don't get AIDS from gym towels, or doorknobs, or shaking hands--or passing somebody the ketchup, for Pete's sake!

Student #1 - Yeah, but what's that supposed to mean, "casual contact"? You can share a Coke--but no sloppy kissing? What's casual, and what's heavy duty? What if you got in the way of a sneeze?

Student #2 - Well, let's ask her! She said we could come in with any questions . . .

#3

OVERHEARD IN THE CLASSROOM . . .

Student #1 - Come on, Mr. Harris--how could you ask somebody you just met: "Are you healthy?"

Student #2 - What are you supposed to do, take an AIDS test on your first date?

Mr. Harris - Hey, hey, keep the volume down! Every home room is having a session on AIDS, so let's go. First, AIDS isn't going to jump from behind a tree and get you! It doesn't just happen. If you get involved with unsafe sex or needle drugs, you put yourself in danger. But you can be safe--if you put some limits on what you do. I suppose what I'm trying to say is: Let's be careful out there. These days, anybody who thinks love should be blind hasn't heard about AIDS. Love needs to be smart, starting here and now. Real life isn't something that starts when you turn 18 or 21. You're making decisions right now that could hurt you--or save your life.

#4

OVERHEARD ON THE BUS . . .

Student #1 - Me, I think I'll pass on drugs--and wait on sex.

Student #2 - Mr. Harris really makes you think, that's for sure. It's hard to figure, though. He says people who sleep around have a bigger chance of getting AIDS. He says if you don't have sex and don't shoot up, you're pretty safe. But what if somebody used to go with somebody who did drugs? What if somebody's already worried about being sick?

Student #1 - Mr. Harris said there was a test, remember? And a clinic downtown that gives it--no questions asked.

Student #2 - Yeah, and there's that hotline to call, too . . .

#5

OVERHEARD AFTER SCHOOL . . .

Student #1 - It's scary, thinking about AIDS.

Student #2 - Yeah, sure. But it's scary to go along pretending AIDS isn't out there, too! I'm glad we've been talking about it in school.

Student #1 - It's funny, but I think some things are changing around here. For one think, Mickey stopped teasing me so much about being "Ms. Clean" You noticed?

Student #2 - I noticed. Maybe he decided playing it safe wasn't such a dumb idea.

Student #1 - It's the smartest move I ever made--and I don't plan to get dumber as I get older, either!

UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Physical 7th Grade	AIDS--It's Everybody's Problem Part II	#P-8

OBJECTIVES

The students will learn more about AIDS by completing the "Myth or Fact" activity sheet.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Activity Sheet, Pen/Pencil	*Lg./**Sm. Group

PROCEDURE

1. Explain to the students that today's lesson will focus on learning the facts about AIDS.
2. Hand out "Myth or Fact" activity sheet.
*3. Go over the survey questions/answers orally with class. Elicit student participation. Discuss/clarify. (NOTE: #1-6 are false, and #7-10 are true.)
**4. Hand out "Myth or Fact" activity sheet. Read instructions to class. Have students form small groups and discuss each item indicating how group feels about each statement.
5. Summarize by discussing the following questions.

QUESTIONS

1. How can you avoid getting AIDS?
2. How can the AIDS virus be spread?
3. How should AIDS affect society's behavior?
4. What have you learned by completing the "Myth or Fact" activity sheet?

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ___Yes ___No

To the student? ___Yes ___No

MYTH OR FACT?

DIRECTIONS: Read the statements below about AIDS and test your knowlecge in deciding between myth and facts. If the statement is true, put a "T" in the blank. If the statement is false, put an "F" in the blank.

_____ 1. You can get AIDS by shaking hands or hugging someone who has AIDS.

_____ 2. The AIDS virus can be spread by sneezing and cougning.

_____ 3. Eating at a restaurant where an employee has AIDS can be dangerous.

_____ 4. You can get AIDS by using public restrooms.

_____ 5. Only homosexuals can get AIDS.

_____ 6. Only intravenous drug users can get AIDS.

_____ 7. The AIDS virus attacks the body's immune system making it impossible for the body to protect itself from diseases.

_____ 8. AIDS is spread by sexual contact.

_____ 9. Using drugs can spread the AIDS virus.

_____ 10. Anyone can get AIDS.

UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Physical 7th Grade	How Do I Look?	#P-9

OBJECTIVES

Students will examine their personal grooming habits by participating in a class discussion of good grooming habits.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Chalkboard, Paper, Pen/Pencil	Large Group

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce activity by asking students to define <u>good grooming</u>. Discuss/clarify.
2. Ask students to explain why good grooming is important. Ask questions 1-7 below.
3. Ask students to write down their daily and weekly grooming schedules on paper. Explain/clarify/model. Allow 5-10 minutes for completion.
4. Elicit student participation and feedback to put a daily and weekly grooming schedule on th board. (Stress that these schedules are examples and theirs might look different. Example: Some of us wash our hair every day while others do not.)
5. To summarize activity, ask students to rate their grooming habits (poor-good-excellent). Encourage them to improve habits if they feel they need to.

QUESTIONS

1. How do you react to someone who is <u>not</u> well groomed?
2. Do fancy, expensive clothes mean good grooming?
3. Since perfume is generally a pleasant odor, does that mean "more is better?"
4. If your clothes are usually washed for you, but one week the washer isn't working, what can <u>you</u> do?
5. What are some physical consequences of poor grooming (cavities, infections)?
6. What changes have you made concerning your grooming since you have been in the seventh grade?
7. How have your friends' grooming habits changed?
8. How do your parents help you?

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ___Yes ___No

To the student? ___Yes ___No

UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Physical 7th Grade	Areas of Discomfort	#P-10

OBJECTIVES

Students will recognize the areas of discomfort unique to the middle school by completing a survey.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Survey: "Areas of Discomfort" Pen/Pencil	Large Group

PROCEDURE

1. Tell students today's activity will focus on things that bother us.
2. Distribute survey to students. Explain/clarify/model.
3. Have students complete survey by following directions given.
4. Tell students to star three statements from the survey which are of concern to them?
5. Allow sufficient time to complete activity.
6. Have students mingle around the classroom until they can find two or three more students who share the same three starred statements.
7. Have the students form small groups together to discuss common areas of discomfort and possible solutions.
8. Allow sufficient time for discussion.
9. To summarize activity, discuss/clarify questions below.

QUESTIONS

1. Did you find many areas that bothered you?
2. Did everyone else in this room have the same answers as you? Why/Why not?
3. What does this tell you about individual differences?
4. Did the students in your small group share other concerns besides the three you stated?
5. What solutions did your group come up with for these concerns?
6. How does it make you feel to know other people have the same concerns as you?
7. How can this information be useful to you during this time of your life?

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ____Yes ____No

To the student? ____Yes ____No

AREAS OF DISCOMFORT

DIRECTION

Read the list slowly and as you come to a problem which bothers you, circle the number in front of it.

1. Being smaller than other kids.
2. Being bigger than other kids.
3. Can't talk plainly.
4. Hands hurting a lot.
5. Having something wrong with me.
6. Don't like school.
7. Would like to join a school club.
8. Afraid of failing in school work.
9. Don't like art.
10. Teachers always telling me what to do.
11. Too much work to do at home.
12. Nothing to do or play with at home.
13. Afraid of brother or sister.
14. Not able to take music lessons.
15. Not having my own room.
16. Being too bashful.
17. Not knowing how to act at parties.
18. Kids not liking to play with me.
19. Never chosen as a leader.
20. Being talked about.
21. Afraid to try new things myself.
22. Can't forget mistakes I've made.
23. Afraid of being punished.
24. Losing my temper.

25. Not enough time for fun and play.
26. Hungry most of the time.
27. Not liking to eat.
28. Not being strong enough.
29. Being too fat.
30. Being too thin.
31. Too hot or cold in school.
32. Not smart enough.
33. Don't like teachers.
34. Not having any fun in school.
35. Not interested in books.
36. Having to take music lessons.
37. Wanting adults at home more.
38. Not liking babies.
39. Adults won't help me.
40. Being made fun of.
41. Playing mostly with little kids.
42. People think I'm a "sissy."
43. Not able to work with others.
44. Being watched all the time.
45. Not being able to sit still.
46. Having bad dreams.
47. Being careless.

UNIT	TITLE	SCRIPT
Physical 7th Grade	Understanding the Handicapped	#P-11

OBJECTIVES

Students will improve their attitude toward the handicapped by role-playing handicap situations.

TIME	MATERIALS	GROUPING
1 Period	Chalkboard	Large Group

PROCEDURE

1. Explain to the students that today we will be discussing the handicapped. Define handicapped.
2. Read questions from the board aloud to students. Elicit feedback/discussion.
3. Explain to the students that we will role-play various situations to give us a greater feel of what they go through.
   ROLE-PLAY SITUATIONS:
   A. Ask students to write their names with the hand they don't ordinarily use. Ask "How did you feel?"
   B. Ask students to unfasten their shoe without using their hands. Ask "How did you feel?"
   C. Ask students to put their heads down on their desks and close their eyes. Ask them to think about what it would be like to be blind.
4. Closure: Ask students if these activities have given them a better understanding of what it's like to have a handicap. Discuss.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you know anyone who has a handicapping condition?
2. How does a person become handicapped?
3. What are some different types of handicaps?
4. What does being different mean to you?
5. When you see a person who is handicapped in some way, how do you feel?

EVALUATION

Was the classroom activity/discussion interesting to you? ___Yes ___No

To the student? ___Yes ___No

V. HELPFUL RESOURCES

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V I. V O L U M E I I P L A N S

Please take a minute to send us some of your best ideas. Photocopy this sheet for your colleagues. We hope to have your information by May, 1991 for Volume II. But send it anyway - perhaps for Volume III.

Send to: Carol Spencer
Shelburne Middle School
Shelburne, Vermont 05482

ACTIVITY NAME:

HOW TO PLAY:

VARIATIONS:

PITFALLS:

SUPPLIES:

RESULTS:

ORIGINAL SOURCE:

Contributed by:

Name:

Home Address:

Home Phone/Work Phone:

School: